



Daily Highlights

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T U E S D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

- + Security Council extends UNMIH mandate to 31 July; authorizes Secretary-General to take steps for full transfer of responsibility from multinational force to Mission by 31 March.
- + Croatian Serb leadership rejects peace plan put forward by United States, Russian Federation, European Union and United Nations.
- + UNPROFOR reports small flare-up of military activity in Srebrenica; fighting continues in Bihac pocket.
- + United Nations launches inter-agency appeal for \$101 million for humanitarian operations in Sudan.
- + UNHCR sends humanitarian assistance and additional personnel to Guinea after influx of refugees from Sierra Leone.
- + Preparatory Committee for 1995 NPT Conference concludes final session.
- + Committee on Rights of Child adopts observations on Philippines, Colombia, Poland, Jamaica, Denmark and United Kingdom.

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The Security Council last night extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) until 31 July and authorized the Secretary-General to prepare for the full transfer of responsibility from the multinational force to UNMIH by 31 March. It determined that a secure and stable environment now existed in Haiti for the deployment of UNMIH, thus meeting a condition for the termination of the multinational force's mission. The Council authorized the Secretary-General to deploy up to 6,000 troops and up to 900 civilian police officers in the country. It took that action by adopting resolution 975 (1995), by 14 votes in favour to none against, with 1 abstention (China).

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The Council urged the Government of Haiti, with the assistance of UNMIH and the international community, to quickly establish an effective national police force and to improve the functioning of the justice system. It asked the Secretary-General to establish a fund to support the international police monitoring programme and assist with the creation of an adequate police force in Haiti. The Council also asked him to apprise it of the modalities of the transition from the multinational force to UNMIH at an early date, and to report on the Mission's deployment by 15 April.

Addressing the Council before the vote, the representative of China said his country would abstain since amendments it had offered had not been included in the final draft. China had suggested that the Council should reconsider UNMIH's mandate and size following its full deployment. After the adoption of the resolution, the representative of the United States said the international community had entered the second phase of its efforts to restore democracy to Haiti with the planned transfer from the multinational force to UNMIH. Although a sense of security now existed in Haiti, criminal forces might see the transition and the upcoming elections as an opportunity for bolder action. She warned that if UNMIH were pushed, it had the mandate, the firepower and the will to push back.

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The Croatian Serb leadership in Knin has rejected a peace plan put forward by the United States, the Russian Federation, the European Union and the United Nations, a spokesman for the United Nations announced today. The Croat Serbs refused even to accept a copy of the plan, unless they also received a written guarantee from the Security Council that the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) would remain in the United Nations Protected Areas (UNPAs) after 31 March.

"This is clearly a setback for the peace efforts", the spokesman said. "We would have wished that this plan be considered at the very least as a basis for negotiations." However, he noted that implementation of the Economic Agreement signed by the Croatian parties in December was proceeding at a steady pace.

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There was a small flare-up of military activity in the Srebrenica enclave in Bosnia and Herzegovina yesterday, according to a United Nations spokesman. He noted that there had been a small but steady build-up of Bosnian Serb forces on the western side of the enclave over the past 15 days. The Bosnian Government had also reinforced its positions nearby. Dutch peace-keepers today attempted to reduce the tension between the two sides.

There was also intense fighting yesterday in the Bihac pocket, with Fikret Abdic's forces and the Croatian Serbs on one side, and the Bosnian Government's Fifth Army Corps on the other, the spokesman continued. He expressed concern that mild weather was facilitating military activity in the region.

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Meanwhile in Sarajevo, UNPROFOR civil affairs officers today chaired a meeting between Bosnian Government and Bosnian Serb representatives to finalize procedures for the reopening of the airport routes tomorrow.

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The United Nations has launched a consolidated inter-agency appeal for \$101 million for the Sudan. The appeal updates emergency humanitarian assistance needs for war-affected and displaced populations for 1995. It reflects the requirements of United Nations agencies and programmes for projects in six priority areas. Those areas include emergency food aid for an estimated 1.2 million people in southern Sudan, and nutrition, health and water services for a total of 4.25 million people in various parts of the country.

The appeal aims to build on improved conditions for humanitarian access achieved in the Sudan over the last two years, and to enhance household food security and health. Programme proposals are based on the results of major assessments conducted around the country last year.

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Some 24,000 people have fled from Sierra Leone to Guinea since rebels swept into the town of Kambia one week ago, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The agency is sending humanitarian relief supplies to the region, and is preparing a new budget for emergency assistance for the refugees. It is also reinforcing its staff in Guinea with a three-person team.

Since civil war broke out in Sierra Leone in 1991, Guinea has played host to some 190,000 refugees. There are another 120,000 Sierra Leonean refugees in Liberia.

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The Preparatory Committee for the 1995 Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has concluded its fourth and final session at Headquarters. The session was devoted to the finalization of the organizational and procedural aspects of the Conference, which will take place in New York from 17 April to 12 May. The Conference is part of the quinquennial review of the Treaty's operation and is also to take a decision on the extension of the Treaty for an indefinite or fixed period.

The Committee reached agreement on the provisional agenda, under which the Conference will review the operation of the NPT and discuss the role of the Treaty in promoting non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and in strengthening international peace and security. The Conference also will discuss measures for promoting wider acceptance of the Treaty, and take a decision on its extension.

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A total of 142 States parties attended the session. In addition, in accordance with the Committee's decision, States not parties to the Treaty, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations were present as observers.

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The Committee on the Rights of the Child last week concluded its eighth session after adopting observations on implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the Philippines, Colombia, Poland, Jamaica, Denmark and the United Kingdom. The Committee identified many positive steps taken to improve the situation of children, but also found areas for improvement.

In the Philippines, the Committee declared, a more active approach should be taken to eliminate discrimination against certain groups of children, including "cultural" communities, disabled children and children born out of wedlock. It said the Colombian police and military needed a new approach to enhance respect for all children, regardless of their social or economic background. The Committee also recommended that the United Kingdom take legislative measures to prohibit the use of corporal punishment in private schools, and consider raising the age of criminal responsibility.

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